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DGCA asks IndiGo CEO to appear before it again

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has asked IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers to appear before it again on Friday amid ongoing flight disruptions. Elbers was summoned on Thursday to submit a report, including an update on the recent operational disruptions. Meanwhile, IndiGo announced that it will offer travel vouchers worth ₹10,000 to each passenger whose flights were cancelled or significantly delayed between December 3 and 5.

US President Donald Trump at a roundtable discussion with top business leaders at White House on Wednesday | AP/PTI

'Warm' Modi, Trump call amid trade deal push

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

AMID hopes for an early framework trade deal and intense discussions over US agriculture and dairy products seeking access to Indian markets, Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a telephonic conversation with US President Donald Trump on Thursday, a call described as "warm and engaging". Modi said that two leaders reviewed progress in the bilateral relationship.

"Had a very warm and engaging conversation with President Trump. We reviewed the progress in our bilateral relations and discussed regional and international developments. India and the US will continue to work together for global peace, stability and prosperity," Modi posted on X after the discussion.

People familiar with the call said the two leaders exchanged views on expanding cooperation across trade, critical technologies, energy, defence and security, and agreed to work closely to address shared strategic and economic challenges.

They also reiterated satisfaction at the momentum in the India–US Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership and underlined the need to sustain progress.

The conversation comes as Washington signals cautious optimism on market access talks. US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer told a Senate Appropriations Subcommittee this week that New Delhi had offered the "best (trade) offer ever" in ongoing negotiations, even as he acknowledged resistance in India to opening its market to US row crops and meat products.

"They have been very difficult nuts to crack... but they have been quite forward leaning," Greer said, calling India a "viable alternative market" for American exporters.

The new US Deputy Trade Representative Rick Switzer's visit to New Delhi is seen as critical, with both sides pushing to make crucial progress in trade talks amid American tariffs, including a 50% duty on certain Indian goods linked to purchases of Russian crude.

$1 mn 'Trump Gold Card' rolled out

President Donald Trump on Wednesday launched the $1 mn 'Trump Gold Card', a visa programme offering pathway to US citizenship. He said if, say, IBM wants to hire an individual at the top of his or her class at Wharton but can't guarantee the person stays in the country, the company can buy the Gold Card and "that employee can be there for a very long period of time."

6 states get SIR extension, Bengal left out

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

THE Election Commission on Thursday revised the timeline for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in six states, including poll-bound Tamil Nadu, following requests from the chief electoral officers. However, poll-bound West Bengal was not granted any extension as the SIR exercise concluded on Thursday. The West Bengal government has been at the forefront of protests demanding a longer extension of SIR citing BLO distress and rushed timeline.

The enumeration period for Tamil Nadu and Gujarat has been extended till December 14, and the draft electoral rolls will be published on December 19, according to a statement by the EC. The enumeration period for these six states and Union territories was to end on Thursday, and the draft electoral rolls were to be published on December 16. The schedule for poll-bound Kerala was revised earlier. The enumeration period for the state will end on December 18, and the draft electoral roll will be published on December 23.

For Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the deadline has been extended till December 18, and the draft electoral rolls will be published on December 23. The exercise in Uttar Pradesh has been extended till December 26, and the draft electoral rolls will be published on December 31.

The enumeration period for Goa, Puducherry, Lakshadweep, Rajasthan and West Bengal end on Thursday, and the draft electoral rolls will be published on December 16.

The decision came against the backdrop of suggestions that several electors had not been able to fill out or submit their enumeration forms. Several opposition parties have alleged that stringent deadlines have taken a toll on the mental health of several BLOs, leading them to attempt or die by suicide. The issue dominated the ongoing winter session of Parliament, where the Opposition attacked the government on BLO deaths and inadequate timeline for the exercise.

Ground machinery is in overdrive, says EC

EC said its ground machinery is in overdrive to re-verify ASD (absent, shifted, dead/duplicate) electors with whom contact could not be established by BLOs despite 3 mandatory attempts. New electors can fill Form 6 and submit it to BLOs, or fill it online

FORMER MUDA CHIEF GOT ₹22.47 CRORE IN BRIBES: ED

YATHIRAJU @ Bengaluru

THE ongoing Enforcement Directorate investigation has revealed that former Commissioner of Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) GT Dinesh Kumar allegedly obtained Rs 22.47crore in bribes by illegally allotting 283 sites, worth Rs 140 crore, during his tenure.

Sources said investigation under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, revealed that proceeds of crime in the form of 1,095 illegally allotted sites, worth about Rs 700 crore, have been generated through criminal activities associated with the offence. The list of 1,095 sites was furnished to the ED by the incumbent MUDA commissioner during a search.

Terming Dinesh Kumar as one of the 'masterminds of the scam', the ED probe revealed that he had received gratification in the form of cash, movable and immovable properties for making illegal allotments. He has directly attempted to indulge, knowingly assist, and is party to involvement in activity connected with proceeds of crime and its possession, acquisition, concealment, etc.

Sources say that of Rs 22.47 crore bribe or illegal gratification obtained by Dinesh Kumar, ED quantified that he had collected Rs 34.65 lakh in cash, earned Rs 8.28 crore by misusing high security bond papers, benefited from Rs 5.86 crore through members of Chamundeshwari Nagara Sarvodaya Sangh, Rs 3.62 crore from Abdul Waheed, Rs 1.70 crore from Cathedral Parish Society, Rs 1.13 crore from Ningamma, Rs 1.02 crore from JSS Mahavidyapeetha Employees House Building Cooperative Society and Rs 49 lakh from Ningamma as 'returns' for the compensatory sites allotted illegally.

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EXPRESS READ

Cabinet nod to bill on quota for SC sub-groups

Belagavi: In a major step towards giving legal backing to its internal reservation decision for Scheduled Castes, the state government on Thursday approved the Karnataka Scheduled Castes (Sub-Classification) Bill | P4

Yathindra says Siddu will complete full term

Belagavi: CM Siddaramaiah's son and MLC Yathindra Siddaramaiah claimed that the high command has ruled out any change in leadership, and that his father will "continue as CM for the five-year term" | P4

WITH THIS ISSUE

CITY'S BEST WEEKEND GUIDE INDULGE — 44 PAGES, INCLUDING 24 OF INDULGE (TABLOID)

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Shri Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

Government of Odisha | ODISHA INDIA'S BEST KEPT SECRET

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GRAND OPENING

Inauguration on 12 December 2025 | 5:00 PM

Shri Mohan Charan Majhi
Chief Minister, Odisha

Chief Guest

Shri Mohan Charan Majhi
Chief Minister

Guests of Honour

Smt. Pravati Parida
Deputy Chief Minister, Odisha

Shri Bibhu Prasad Tarai
MP, Jagatsinghpur

Shri Sambit Patra
MP, Puri

Shri Tusharkanti Behera
MLA, Kakatpur

Shri Om Prakash Mishra
MLA, Satyabadi

Shri Ashrit Pattanayak
MLA, Pipili

Smt. Upasna Mohapatra
MLA, Brahmagiri

Shri Sunil Kumar Mohanty
MLA, Puri

For Details

Department of Tourism, Government of Odisha

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